

## **MAG Regional Human Services Plan Community Meeting Summary Sheet**

From June through August 2005, input was received from 253 people through:

- 22 focus groups were conducted with a total of 213 people
  - Homelessness: 8 focus groups with 90 people
  - Disability: 2 focus groups with 30 people
  - Domestic Violence: 7 focus groups with approximately 40 people
  - Aging: 3 focus groups with approximately 30 people
  - Youth: 2 focus groups with 23 people
- Three community hearings with a total of 40 people
  - West Valley: 16 people
  - Phoenix: 18 people
  - East Valley: 6 people

People at the meetings identified the following points (survey data are available in a companion document):

### Strengths

- *Homelessness*: Shelters, rehab programs, and AHCCCS
- *Disability*: Able to work and make a living, therapies, caring people and Medicaid/AHCCCS
- *Domestic Violence*: Existing support groups, victim advocates in the courts, counseling services, police referrals
- *Aging*: Opportunities to engage in communities, senior centers, talent and skills among the aging population
- *Youth*: Teen councils, events, sports, churches and families
- *West Valley*: Communication, grass roots efforts, government involvement
- *Phoenix*: Value Options' Red and Blue Alert System, Human Services Campus, multiple service providers, access to MAG Regional Council
- *East Valley*: Diversity, range of services available, community councils, collaborations

*Common strengths*: Support available through agencies; opportunities to engage in the community activities

### Biggest Needs

- *Homelessness*: affordable housing, transportation, and dental care
- *Disability*: Socialization opportunities, more therapists, look at individual needs, more funding for services and transportation
- *Domestic Violence*: Affordable housing, more public transportation options, access to childcare, more education for police/court officials, more public awareness

- *Aging*: Affordable housing, more public transportation options, affordable healthcare, better communication between government and local communities
- *Youth*: More protection, increase number of youth centers, and more entertainment
- *West Valley*: More youth services, more aging services, better transit, need to promote human services more, need to increase capacity of non-profit agencies
- *Phoenix*: Better transportation, affordable housing, expanded agency collaboration, streamlining of the social services system, paradigm shift in general public attitude about human services
- *East Valley*: Affordable housing, multi-lingual services, safe and reliable transportation options, services for substance abuse and mental illness, more awareness of existing services

*Common needs*: More affordable housing and improved transportation

### Solutions

- *Homelessness*: Increase funding, increase education, and improve mental health and substance abuse programs
- *Disability*: Have clients' needs dictate services, increase funding for therapies and socialization opportunities, centrally coordinate information and referrals, do more outreach and education
- *Domestic Violence*: Begin prevention education earlier with elementary students, educate the general public on how to recognize the signs of abuse, tougher penalties for abusers
- *Aging*: Improve transportation (wider bus services and more access points), more free opportunities to volunteer/socialize, hold small community meetings to interact with government officials
- *Youth*: Increased community involvement with youth, use vacant land for youth activities or programs, and cleaning up the community
- *West Valley*: Increase communication, increase collaborations, improve transit with a commuter rail
- *Phoenix*: Work towards more community collaborations on projects, such as the Regional Transportation Plan, offer tax credits to developers who build a portion of their housing as affordable housing and work on reframing the issue of poverty.
- *East Valley*: Hold new companies moving into the area accountable for being good corporate citizens by requiring an additional "human services" development fee, require developers to include a certain percentage of affordable housing in new developments, more collaborations between the cities and nonprofit providers in the area

*Common solutions*: Increase communication, collaboration, and community involvement

What makes this group special or different?

- *Homelessness*: Not addressed
- *Disability*: People are slowly becoming more integrated into community, barriers like stigma still exist, disabilities are permanent, clients needs becoming more intense
- *Domestic Violence*: There is still a stigma attached to the issue of DV that makes victims ashamed to admit they need assistance. It often takes several tries before a victim is able to successfully leave an abusive situation.
- *Aging*: Includes the frail/elderly population that frequently has a wide range of needs, as well as the large, younger boomer population that is soon to retire. Boomers are younger and healthier with fewer needs, but want to stay engaged in their communities.
- *Youth*: Not addressed
- *West Valley*: Many agencies don't want to serve people so far west, hard to get new agencies to move in and to increase capacity
- *Phoenix*: Perception is that Phoenix has taken on the bulk of the responsibility to provide shelter and services for the whole region, placing a greater burden upon the City.
- *East Valley*: Funding crunch in East Valley cities. Some are beginning to look at human services issues from a public safety perspective and how much it would cost in the long run *not* to fund these areas.

*Common unique traits*: Nuances exist in the different subpopulations that require programs to deliver responsive and appropriate services. Different areas in the Region have different capacities for making these services available.

Notes: A youth focus group was scheduled for the East Valley but no participants attended. One will be scheduled for the Fall 2005.